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Quatrains





7

James Crockett Esq. R.I.
With the Author's
Compliments.

New York 1832



Quatrains.



Quatrains
LIFE'S MYSTERY
AND
OTHER POEMS

BY
WM. WILSEY MARTIN

AUTHOR OF
"By Solent and Danube," "Poems and Ballads," &c.



LONDON:
ELKIN MATHEWS
AT THE SIGN OF THE BODLEY HEAD IN VIGO STREET
1891

APAS904

*' The Moving Finger writes, and, having writ,
Moves on ; nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.*

OMAR-I-KHAYYAM.

TO
THE QUAIN, ART-LOVING, AND ERUDITE
FRATERNITY
YCLEPFD
"YE SETTE OF ODDE VOLUMES"
(*George Charles Haité, Esq., President*)
THESE POEMS
ARE
BY PERMISSION, RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED.

*' To friends and eke to foes true kindness shote:
No kindly heart can prove unkind, I trow:
Harshness will alienate a bosom friend,
And kindness reconcile a deadly foe.'*

OMAR-I-KHAYYAM.



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Quatrains.

*' Hark at the lips of this pink whorl of shell,
And you shall hear the ocean's surge and roar ;
So in the Quatrain's measure, written well,
A thousand lines shall all be sung in four.'*

F. DEMPSTER SHERMAN.



Quatrains.



WORDS.

I.

WORDS are the stranded foam the sea-winds blew,
Or bloom-snow falling in the springing weeks ;
Unless the character of him who speaks
Stand out, behind the words, as good and true!

II.

Words are but feathers, bright or black or grey,
Upon the small winds' fingers borne and lost ;
But actions are the great rocks—tempest cross'd,
Though fretted by a million storms, they stay.

MISCHIEF-SEEDS.

Brood not on words or slights, their biting force
Is measured by their housing—mischief-seeds
Which, nursed and tended, bring forth poison-weeds
Whose bitter crop is hatred and remorse.

TROUBLES.

Our troubles are the rocks in low stream's bed,
Whereat we fret and chafe, and strive and weep;
But Heaven sends rain—our stream grows wide
and deep—
The rocks lie hid, and thoughts of them are dead.

BURIALS.

We dig deep graves, while warm is human breath,
But none so deep as that which covers Love.
Where Honour lies the dust is thick above;
Less green are these, than those that wait on Death.

PLEASURE.

Then Pleasure came; keen lightnings round her play'd,
And in her lustrous eyes. Her lips were flame.
'Stay with me evermore,' I sighed. 'My name,'
She said, 'Would not be 'Pleasure' if I stay'd.'

DEATH'S TEST.

Two Leaders strove; each skilful, wise, and bold,
Till Azrael came, resolved to test their worth.
He touch'd, and lo! One turn'd to crumbling earth.
And One became a statue of pure gold.

CARE.

Care came, a feather-weight when morning shed
Pale primrose gleams on vernal life; but grew
A load of chains ere day-clouds hid the blue.
Night found it heavy as a world of lead.

CLEAR IN THE DEEPS.

As shines a white stone through a Devon stream,
Whose waters pour melodiously, yet strong :
So, through the stream and river of his song—
Clear in the deeps—the Poet's thought should gleam.

SONG FLIGHTS.

As drops the lark's full song—beyond our ken—
From Heaven's blue on our entranc'd ears,
The Poet's thought, from flight among the spheres,
Returns in music to the hearts of men.

THANKS.

If our full hearts should give thanks manifold
For all we have, for all we hold and prize :
Much more, a thousand-fold, should thanks arise
For all we have *not*—all we would *not* hold.

LITTLE MYRTLE.

I.

Dear rosy Question ! babbling all the day !
 'What am I ? Tell me, ere my curls grow old !'
 I cannot tell thee, Sweet ! though curls be gold,
And thou reiterate till they be grey.

II.

O little Query ! like a rose unblown,
 With folded mysteries in pink and white—
 Love cannot solve thee in thy morning light,
Nor Wisdom when thy three-score years have flown.



LABURNUMS.**I.**

O golden wonder of the wondrous Spring !
How gleams thy affluence 'tween the April rains.
The nimble fairies forge thy golden chains,
And hang them on thee while their thrushes sing.

II.

They forge them in the founderies of the air
With flames of Spring; thy molten gold drips
through
Where interlacing boughs frame bits of blue :
Each chain, a thought of God to lighten care.



SWEET WOODRUFF.

A Poet, true to Art and God, not read
In his life-space, but who when gone receives
Full meed, is like sweet-woodruff, in whose leaves
Men find no perfume until they be dead.

INTERPRETATION.

Nature's fair husk the Poet doth ignite
With his soul's flame : subjectively he sees
Form, force, and law, and deep analogies :
And all her beauty blazes in his light.

THE LIFE WE PRIZE.

The life we prize is not the life we know,
But one untrodden, hid in silver haze,
Whose opening path allures our wistful gaze—
The moss lies deep lights gleam, and winds are low.

IN THE FLESH.

We might hear spirit-music were our ears
Not dull'd and vex'd by voicings of the earth.
We might see shapes beyond the mortal birth
Were our sad eyes not dimm'd with human tears.

NO WHIT LESS SWEET.

This one pale primrose is no whit less sweet
Because a thousand deck yon hills above ;
Nor is this Maid less worthy of thy love
Because a thousand others throng the street.

CLOUDS.

In Spring, the pearly clouds rose higher day by day ;
White fleeces higher still in Summer's azure skies ;
Rich Autumn brought them closer, flush'd in
glory's dyes,
Now Winter's hair is white, and clouds are low and
grey.

EARTH DUST.

Fee thou the silent earth-dust with free hand ;
Its teeming force will mother all thy needs.
Grudge not thy toil, lest armies of the weeds,
Couch, charlock, thistle, come and take thy land.

THE FIRST FROST.

The year's first frost had crept on bloom and leaf ;
A chill white horror sat on path and bed ;
The queenly sunflower hung her golden head,
And her limp hands droopt feebly in her grief.

AMONG THE REEDS.

Mere rubbish drifted down it look'd—brown sedge and
weeds—
I touch'd the heap—a little water-hen out flew,
And bared her dull-grey eggs, brown-spotted, to my
view.
Life wrapp'd in Death. Wind-laughter through the
whistling reeds.

THE HUMAN CRY.

I.

The Human lifts a wailing to be heard,
And clinging hands to clutch the dim Unknown
That draws for ever back behind His Throne ;
Who gives good gifts, but speaketh not a word.

II.

The world grows old : still lifts the bitter breath ;
' Why ? Tell us, why ? Behind our prison bars.'
O children ! Are we wise ? Hope crown'd with
stars
Is ours. And Love that dieth not.—And Death !



A MEMORY OF LOSS.

I.

The Beauty-cup that held his Joy was frail,
He knew, and brittle under shock or strain ;
This knowledge gripp'd his heart till heat of pain
Burnt up his Joy and left him only bale.

II.

His Beauty-cup still smiles—a dream of bright
Art-woven rays ; but all it held has fled ;
A ghostly fear has kill'd it, and instead
A Memory of Loss cries through the night.

FIRE-LIGHT FANCIES.

(A Picture by Arthur Hacker, Esq.)

Weird fire-light dreams are hers. On her young sight
Strange faces grow, wrapp'd in the ruddy light,
And fade, while through the caves and grotts of flame
Move changing shapes like phantoms of the night.

THE HOUR.

Ambition graspeth not its crown of Power,
Though shored by Wealth, Brain-force, and Will
to bend
The back of Circumstance to meet its end,
Unless Time's finger mark the ripen'd Hour.

NOT WASTED.

Blood is not wasted when a Hero bleeds :
Earth drinks it not alone: a Nation's heart
Absorbs the precious rain, whose atoms start
New life that runs its course in noble deeds.

THE MASTER MIND.

He coins high aspirations into facts ;
He stamps upon their plastic gold his mark ;
And, ere his noonbeams die into the dark,
Fulfil himself, and sways his fellows' acts.

THE MAN.

Brain-lightnings—lurid gleams—mad hopes and fears
Converging to one point—like lens-caught rays—
The People's Prayer, 'A Man to guide our ways!'
The Hour is born—and lo! The Man appears!

HE.

Friendly to all, or rich or poor,
Whate'er their creed.
A Friend to few. To one or two
A Friend indeed!

TO THE CREST.

In sorrow's mountains moved he through a night
Of starless gloom. Thought urged him to the crest,
Face set; hands clench'd; he ever upward prest,
And on the heights found calm, wide air, and light.

HIS HOME.

He watch'd the orbs of light in Night's deep dome
Flashing familiar signals from the sky ;
And wonder'd which swift world, encircling high
Its central sun, would be his Spirit's Home.

SECRETS.

Earth hides her secrets in her breast : the sea
Hides hers in rocky clefts, in sands and weeds.
So each tried heart, love's pearls and wrecks of
deeds,
Doth cover up in its own mystery.

A THOUSAND TO ONE.

One snowflake kiss I'd give and take away.
Thy 'No' I dare not heed, for sweet Love's sake.
A thousand tongues hast thou to bid me take ;
And but one little one to say me nay.

WAITING.

As shuts the wild wood sorrel when the light
Dies down, so shuts my heart behind a gate
Of gloom when thou art gone. Thy dawn I wait,
As her closed leaves the passing of the night.

LOVE'S WAY.

Strive not Love's stream, tumultuous, to stay
With social boulders ; neither aid its force :
If it have volume it will run its course,
Make its own bridal bed, and have its way.

PAOLO E FRANCESCA.

As molecules together whirl in fire,
When oxygen woos carbon into flame ;
Some frail affinities, with scorch of shame,
Whirl down the winds of passion and desire.

FORETASTE.**I.**

Feast not on promised joy with too great greed ;
Anticipation will but make thee feed

On thy sweet joy, whose volume, growing less,
May cheat thy hope when it is thine indeed ;

II.

Nor dread too much the face of threaten'd woe ;
'Tis dry-lipp'd fear that bids it loom and grow ;

Nor multiply its image in thy tears,
But face it boldly as thou wouldst a blow



SMALL AND GREAT.

Deem nought so small, it cannot sway thy fate—
A gnat may wreck a Dynasty or State—
Nor think, as acting on the humblest lot,
That aught beneath the sun can be too great.

HIS TIME I BIDE.

Four blows of Fate crash'd down. 'O God!' I cried,
'In mercy spare! one more would wreck my heart.'
The fifth blow came: but strength to bear my part
Came too; so now, broad-back'd, His time I bide.

LOVE AND HATE.

Can true Love turn to Hate? Can its pure force
Be changed to that which stings without remorse?
Ah no! But when it dies, Hate writhes her coils,
And rears her cobra-length on Love's pale corse.

LOVE'S NATURE.

Love's nature changeth never day by day,
Though human heart-shrines crumble and decay ;
 But sometimes, when his eyes are drench'd with
 tears,
He lifts his sad white wings and flies away.

NATURE-SPEECH.

Not ear-close, Nature's speech in moon or star—
The voice within the rose calls from afar—
 But close in human lips, in human eyes,
Revealing in a hand-clasp all we are.

THE LAND OF MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN.

O wonder land ! whose pathways in the years
Gone by look'd soft to tread, leading to bowers
 Of rosy ease and amaranthine flowers.
I turn to gaze, but cannot see for tears !

THE PRIMROSE.

She warms our hearts ; for all our Springs of old
Shine out from her sweet face in sunny rays.
By wintry paths she lifts her head : and says,
' Hope is not dead—I've kiss'd away the cold.'

OLD TRUTHS.

The golden coinage of a long past reign,
Re-minted oft, may circulate to-day ;
And old-world truths—pure gold—from ages grey,
Pass current as new thoughts from brain to brain.

GOD'S WINE.

Symbol of Youth and Life ! clear bubbling spring
That pour'st perennially God's crystal wine
Which all may quaff—I worship at thy shrine,
The whole wide earth holds not a purer thing.

.UNION.

Scorn not the aid one loyal mind can bring ;
A noble growth expands by small degrees ;
Not all at once leaves clothe the wintry trees,
But each burst bud helps on the greening Spring.

FRATERNITY.

Fraternity is one long circling chain
Of equal links—steel-strong : break one, break all—
It holds true minds in gently temper'd thrall,
But gives league-strength to meet Life's tug and strain.

GOING HOME.

Life's link-man lifts his fitful yellow light—
How like dry bones the hand that takes the fee—
His cavern voice says 'Home': and silently
We wheel into the mysteries of the Night.

Life's Mystery.

7

*I saw a busy Potter by the way,
Kneading with might and main a lump of clay ;
And, lo ! the clay cried, ‘ Use me gently, pray,
I was a man myself but yesterday !’*

OMAR-I-KHAYYÁM.



Life's Mystery.

ARGUMENT.

(THE POET'S VOICE.)

LIFE is the bond between Man and the Vegetable Kingdom. It is the bond of kinship amongst all Organisms. *Life is One. One Unity.* There are not varieties in kind—as Plant life, Fish life, Insect life, Animal life. There is in the Universe but One Life pulsating through organic things. Life is a vital entity, and not a mere condition of Matter. It persistently seeks

the germ. It is universal. Like Matter, it is indestructible ; and like Force, it is never lost.

Death does not annihilate Life, it does but shatter the shrine or tenement in which, for the time being, Life dwells. Life, liberated by Death, rejoins the Life-energy of the Universe, and is free to animate new forms. Thus in the organic world is maintained the equipoise of Life and Death.





LIFE'S MYSTERY.

I.

What is the bond between me and this flower ?

We breathe the common air, we smile and weep ;

Earth's bosom takes us both when our last sleep
Falls on the lids that open'd for an hour.

The mystery call'd Life awhile we hold ;

The loss of it, call'd Death, awhile we wait ;

Vigour or feebleness may crown our state.

A flower can suffer in its inmost fold.

I loved its ways, and watch'd it day by day
Open its petals to the kindly sun ;
When death crept near, I mark'd how one by one
Its curl'd leaves sadden'd into brown decay.

What is the bond between us ? Is it light,
Without whose kiss we pine, and droop, and die ?
Or tear-rain falling from a weeping sky ?
Or robe of air gemm'd with the stars of night ?



II.

As softly fall to earth the sighing leaves,
A Poet's voice fell on my Spirit's ears
Like whispers of the dawn, ere day appears
Grey-swathed to move among the harvest sheaves.

'O closer, closer still ! as close as fate.
It moves within us like a flame, and gives
A brotherhood with everything that lives ;
A Law to love God's creatures small and great.

'Life is the bond. It makes us kin. It brings
Its quickening force to every perfect germ,
With protoplasm moulds in order'd term,
One Life pulsating through organic things.

‘ One Life, continuous as the crowded air,
That plastic slave that garners all Life’s needs,
The gaseous energies, the germs, and seeds,
Wherewith it builds its structures layer on layer.

‘ One Life, in moss and fern, in beast and bird,
In waking babe, and grandsire old and grey ;
In flame-wing’d gnats that whirl a summer-day,
In horn’d strength that bellows in the herd.

‘ One Life in all the countless forms that be ;
One Life enshrined and hid in myriad cells
Which are but coverings for Life. It dwells,
One Life, in teeming air, and earth, and sea !’

III.

O star-eyed Science ! tell us what is Life ;
Probe to its source and lay it bare to sight,
Its secret plasms flood with naked light,
And show it pulsing underneath thy knife.

Through folded tissues trace its primal stage,
In mould, in mildew, fern and flower, and tree ;
The firstling throb of Life show thou to me
Ere crowding moments guerdon it with age.

In fly or bird ; from moneron to man,
Reveal the starting point on Life's quick road ;
The moulding energy which needs no goad
To fill with finish'd work its narrow span.

Add lens to lens, bend back the rays, converge
God's pencil-lights upon His handiwork ;
With ever sharpening sight peer through the murk,
And out of cloud-mists bid the truth emerge.



IV.

And Science answers, solemn-voiced and low,
 ‘Look with these eyes in reverence and awe
 Through wide phenomena to changeless Law,
Then learn to know how little thou can'st know.

‘Dead flower! It knew the dark and light; the
 tread
Of windy spring : could feel beneath its rind
The ‘skyey influences’ which act on mind.
It had sensations ere its leaves were shed.

'And wise selective power ; could subtly choose
Its sustenance within its own domain
From soil, or light, or drops of silver rain ;
The food innutritive it could refuse.

'It breathed the bounteous air in green content
Through lung-like leaves and blossoms bright of
hue ;
Swung incense-prayers in censers spark'd with
dew,
And smiled accord with its environment.

'Of warp and woof invisible to sight
It wove its garments beautiful with stars,
Inwrought with glowing suns and rainbow bars,
With tender threads of dawn, and noon, and night.

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 The ‘skyey influences’ which act on mind.
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In fly or bird ; from moneron to man,
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'Dead flower! It knew the dark and light; the
 tread
Of windy spring: could feel beneath its rind
 The 'skyey influences' which act on mind.
It had sensations ere its leaves were shed.

A semi-fluid speck the point in each.
O plasmic wonder ! marvellous as true—
O mystery divine ! so old, so new !
Veil thou the sight that can no further reach.



v.

Then I. No further reach ! Poor human eyes !
Why climb we knowledge-peaks, or mine below,
Only to know how little we may know !
Is not this vanity beneath the skies ?

I know not anything ! I only know
I love the flowers as sweet and silent friends—
Though all unlearn'd their mysteries and ends,
Yet 'mid their leaves I feel my friendships grow.



Came they on earth to freight the circling air
With tingling odours? or to crowd Man's sense
With Beauty, luring Art through form intense
To follow lovingly up Nature's stair?

To take her object-lessons from the leaves
Of Greek acanthus, or the clinging vine,
The lily's gracious curve and fluent line,
The poppy-cups among the fulvid sheaves?

Why are their robes so beautiful to sight?
Can colour make them glad that they repeat
The sunset-glories of the moon of wheat
In raiment woven of the strands of light?



VI.

The Poet's voice again, like mountain stream
Tinkling its way 'tween Summer's lichen'd stones,
Made answer to my thought in silver tones
Sweet as the marriage-bells of bridal dream.

'O Stars of woodland wastes ! of rock and glen !
How dreary were the Earth without your rays,
Your cheery laughing lights in fever'd ways,
Your lamps of colour by the paths of men.

‘Whate’er your purpose, who can doubt your right
To full fruition of the life-boon sent?
To know the best in your environment,
And revel in the gladness of the light?’

‘What more can Man save widen in degree,
And from the apex of the Kingdoms gain
A larger view, a fuller life attain,
Engirded ever by a Spirit-sea

‘As is the *cosmos* by the chain of God,
A chain He lowers to this earth of ours,
Whose links are impress’d Laws and silent Powers
In touch with worlds and daisies of the sod?’

VII.

I said—Is Matter more than Life ? No storm
Annihilates : we tear, we crush, we burn
Yet cannot make an end : from out its urn,
It, Proteus-like, but takes another form.

Scorch'd by a brazen sun or spiked by frost,
Lipp'd by the flame or wreck'd on howling shores :
The Hand that grasps the whole, the part restores,
He gathers up the fragments—nought is lost.

Is Matter more than Life ? Doth Nature weigh
Its atoms in a miser's scales, yet strew
The grains of Life with spendthrift palm, and view
The Spark-divine as something less than clay ?

O Death, Death, Death ! that ever clogs the tread
Of Life. Art thou his complement, his twin
Bound to him evermore, without, within,
Or his pale shadow moving 'mong the dead ?



VIII.

The Poet's voice—' Dreams, dreams : my dreams are
nought,

They nothing prove ; yet, as the listless wind'
There falls to me from Nature's immanent mind
What moves to words the aching pulse of thought.

' This earth of blossoms is not crude or raw,
Unfinish'd, fashion'd with the sloping hour ;
The Laws that act to-day with sovereign power
Will not to-morrow fail from hidden flaw.

'The Great Cause gave stupendous gifts in Space,
Force, Matter, Life, the Laws that loose and
keep,
Gave Death, in semblance of its symbol Sleep,
And dread phenomena that shroud His face.

The Force that moves the flower-haunting wing,
Or cleaves the mountain from its cloud-hung
tower
Is never lost.—The Energy and Power
That lives as Life is not a meaner thing.

'The Type is left : the lowest moss or worm
When its short course is perfected in sleep
Leaves something for the spinning Earth to keep.
The Life-force ever waits upon the germ.

‘ The seedling dies, but leaves a seed : the rain,
Air, earth, and sun another flower will give ;
Its body's part will in its issue live ;
Its force of Life, as Life, will live again.

‘ The inmost glow ; the principle of Life ;
The vital strength that came to it at birth ;
Came from without, when, wrapp'd in swaddling
earth,
The tiny germ awoke to verdurous strife.

‘ This could not die and share the blossoms' fate,
The principle of Life could not decay.
Must He who rests behind His laws alway,
A new Creation every Spring create ?

'The infinite exuberance that swarms
 'Neath Indian skies, the million-peopled leaves,
 The buzzing walls and roofs, and chattering
 eaves ;
The armies marching where the sunshine warms.

'The panting forests blazing with the sheen
 Of glancing wings, and gem-besprinkled flowers,
 Where Life runs rampant in the golden hours,
And clothes the log in raiment of a Queen.

'Is this Life-force—when Death stands by the bier
 Of each small organism—spent and dead ?
 Or like the human breath, that having fed
Life's flame, transform'd, rejoins the atmosphere ?

'The harvest life—a boon from Nature's core—
That droops to Earth with Autumn's golden
grain.

Is this force lost and wasted? Not again
Reclothed, reshined; but dead for evermore?

'Ah no! All streams of Life by that vast sea
Are gulf'd, whose waves imponderous wrap the
globe

Like polar currents in a formless robe,
Mysterious, awful, circling ceaselessly.


'Life is immortal! God's breath never dies!
It doth but change its tenement on earth.
Enshrined, it wakes the nestling germ to birth,
And, when the shrine is shatter'd, takes its rise

' Beyond the secret air, and compensates
The drain incessant of the vital breath :
This is the equipoise of Life and Death,
Where each for ever on the other waits.

' O goodly treasure cup ! thou to the brim
Art full ; no precious drop, however tost,
Upon the wind's broad back is blindly lost.
Though Life's great affluence lave thy utmost rim.

' It o'erfloweth not in ways diverse—
Law presses equally along its line—
It knows no waste ; but as the glad sunshine
Its wavelets move through God's wide Universe.


'Life seeks the germ—an universal flame—
In glowing valleys of the planet Mars,
Along the crowded highways of the stars,
On shining slopes of Worlds that have no name.'



x

'Then Science speaks. 'The dreams of Poet-sage
Are only dreams—yet oft-times in the grey
Soft dawn of truth, his finger points a way
That Science follows in a later age.

'His inner sight may view the soul of things ;
His inner ears catch tones beyond the sense
Of myriad multitudes whose ears are dense.
Yet——Science moves not on a Poet's wings.



‘ Life comes from pre-existent life. The germ,
A microcosm of the past, contains
The Life, and when environment sustains,
The organism lives and runs its term.

‘ And yet—the Poet’s dream may, like the rind,
Enfold the fruit ; and various Life may be
Through many million forms—One Unity !
One impress of the Great Creative Mind !

‘ One quickening force that, passing through all
things,
By Death replenish’d, undiminish’d still,
And pressing on each germ with moulding skill
Builds up the structures evolution brings.’

'So Science stands with lifted head—star-eyed,
She sweeps the distant plain, the mountains'
brow;
Calm rests upon her lip.—'We know not now,
But light is shining on the other side.'



Other Poems.



Other Poems.



INNERMOST.

I.

Can aught into the Innermost intrude?
The cryptic chamber of the heart of man,
Whereof his closest knoweth not the plan.
Can aught dwell there save self and solitude?

II.

No second self walks with me o'er its floors;
The nearest, dearest, truest, of my friends
Knows but the vestibule: nor ever wends
Beyond the silence of its guarded doors.



III.

The reflex of a smile is sometimes thrown—
A Mother's smile—upon its inner way,
Sweet lips and eyes of tenderness to stay
Awhile with love, yet not to keep the throne.

IV

The crypt is void ; although a dear dead face
With faint aurēola of Angel's hair
Brings down at times a light that lingers there ;
That sheds its gold, yet cannot fill the place.

V.

O small white hand now clasping nothingness !
O voice of song ! Could she in life have fill'd
The inner chamber and its aching still'd ?
Nay. God alone must fill it. Nothing less !

FAITH.**I.**

**My Faith is but a lisping shell
Whose inmost whorls are filled with Thee.
Too faint its speech from far off sea,
Thy Love, Thy Mystery to tell.**

II.

**My Faith is but a flickering ray,
Too weak to guide my steps aright.
Keep Thou my heart, and give me Light,
So dark my path, so rough my way !**

III.

**My Faith is but a feeble clasp ;
I, trembling, lift my hand to Thee.
Oh ! give me strength, enabling me
To hold Thee in an iron grasp.**

SONG.

DREAM DARLING, DREAM.

Sleep, dear one, sleep.—Day loiters in the west ;
The Bridegroom Night is wooing her to rest.—
Dream loved one, dream : The Day beyond the sea
Dreams of the Night : So darling, dream of me,
Dream darling, dream of me !

Sleep, dear one, sleep.—Day rests with all her charms,
And eager Night enfolds her in his arms.—
Dream loved one, dream : As Day of Night in sleep,
So dream of me whose Love is strong and deep.
Dream darling, Love is deep !



ON LIFE'S BANQUET STAIRS.

I.

We pass each other on Life's banquet stairs ;
New guests are mounting to the festal light,
While we descend together to the Night,
Close muffled 'gainst the outside wintry airs.

II

They tread upon our shadows as they climb
With quick strong steps to join the crowd and
crush.
We see, in sparkling eyes and speaking blush,
How expectation gilds the coming time.

III.

Young forms go by us tossing rosy sprays
In brave apparel, tints of flower and bird,
Of blossom-patches by the summer stirr'd,
With sheen of silk, and gems that scatter rays.

IV.

Knew we such zest, true heart ! when mounting up ?
Such haste to lift the chalice to our lips,
To learn if pleasure sweeter is in sips,
Or when, with manhood's thirst, we drain the cup ?

V.

Shall we stand by and carp at these, and say—
'Go, giddy ones, and moth-like fire your wings—
Pleasure is pain, and laughter sorrow brings.'
Shall we speak thus, who once were young as they ?

VI.


Nay—rather will we greet with smiles—our eyes
God-speeding them—warm sun about our snow,—
To one or two, we'll whisper as they go.
'Night follows noon. Be moderate, be wise!'

VII.

For me—ah true! I've sung neath Heaven's dome,
Sung at my work, and bask'd in kindly rays
That seem, when gleaming out of memory's haze,
The efflorescence of an unseen Home.

VIII.

And I have known mute days of gloom and cloud,
When copse and wood were voiceless in the spring
To my shut ears, when hope, outrun, took wing,
And sorrow swathed my soul as with a shroud.



IX.

But God's sun drank the mists and clouds, as dew ;
Dim paths grew clear and soft, and safe to tread ;
The woods found hidden voices overhead,
And I found Love in eyes of April blue.

X.

Farewell ! We've supp'd. Life's wine was keen and
bright ;
Old friends move by and gain the outer door ;
The wind blows buffets with a northern roar,
And past the shadows gleams the distant light !



GRAINS.

Scorn not the feather if you prize the wing.



On the laburnum chains, the fairies swing
Their little golden pitchers, fill'd with Spring.



The pinions of success can spare no quill.



SPRING IN BONDS.

I.

Black Winter rear'd a prison grim and great ;
He tomb'd sweet Spring therein with icy bands,
Then call'd his bitter winds from northern lands
And set them, warder-wise, to guard the gate.

II.

He sang, he laugh'd a blizzard laugh, he cried—
' Mine, mine! The Maid is mine for evermore !
The hurricane's wild bells on Arctic shore
Shall peal in thunders when I wed my bride.'

III.

The Sun-God heard the captive Maiden's moan,
And sent a shaft of love, so strong, so true,
It pierced the prison and its Keeper through,
And drove him howling to his farthest zone.

IV.


The ice-walls fell : the gyves slipp'd from her hand :
The Maid stepp'd forth : bird-music shook the skies :
Her lover look'd into her blue blue eyes
And led her over all the laughing land.



THE TRUE SHAMROCK.

"THE wood-sorrel, or *Oxalis Acetosella*, like
"the trefoil clovers, is a sleeper, and folds its
"leaves to rest at evening close. With its bright,
"very bright, green trefoil leaves, and its trans-
"parent, white-veined, and slightly drooping
"bells, it is one of our prettiest natives, *the*
"*true Shamrock of Ireland*: and it is difficult
"to imagine why the Emerald Isle gave it up,
"with its emerald leaves, *for the plain creeping*
"*clover now called the Shamrock.*"

SPENCER THOMPSON, M.D., L.R.C.S.E.
In "Wild Flowers."



THE TRUE SHAMROCK.

Wood-Sorrel,
True Shamrock !

Ah ! Why art thou weeping ?
Why cluster the dew-tears so thickly on thee ?
Know you not that my Sunbeam far from me is sleeping,
Far, far, from my bosom,
Another tryst keeping,
A Lover's tryst keeping,
Beyond the salt sea ?

Wood-Sorrel,
True Shamrock !

Ah ! Why dost thou languish,
Low drooping thy head by the grey mossy stone ?
I should droop, though my Sunbeam were with me to
vanquish
The ice of my bosom ;
To lighten my anguish,
My sorrow and anguish,
When grieving alone.

Wood-Sorrel,
True Shamrock!
What grief dost thou cover,
Close pent in thy emerald leaflets of pain?
The loss of sweet Erin! Lost, lost, to her lover :
My leaf from her bosom
Cast off for another ;
Dethroned for another,
My leaf without stain.

Wood-Sorrel,
True Shamrock!
The winds waft thy story—
How Erin, the changeful, discarded thy leaf.
Yea, I the true Shamrock, in ages now hoary,
I reign'd in her bosom,
One with her in glory,
In honour, in glory,
Now only in grief!

Wood-Sorrel,
True Shamrock!
Low drooping, repining,
What creeper has taken thy name and thy place?
Alas! a coarse clover, with trefoils entwining,
Has crept to her bosom ;
In darkness maligning,
In secret maligning,
The badge of her race.

Wood-Sorrel,
True Shamrock!
Thy vein'd bells are bending ;
Why fold'st thou thy hands at the close of the day?
When mystical incense, saint-nurtured, is wending
To Night's starry bosom ;
Ere dawn-beams are blending
With those of Night's ending,
For Erin I pray!

I, the Sorrel,
True Shamrock!

When the world's tears are falling,
Pray meekly that Erin less sadful may be;
That she root out the poor tangling weed that is
crawling

Snake-like on her bosom;
And, when Angels are calling,
When true loves are calling,
Turn to them, and to me.



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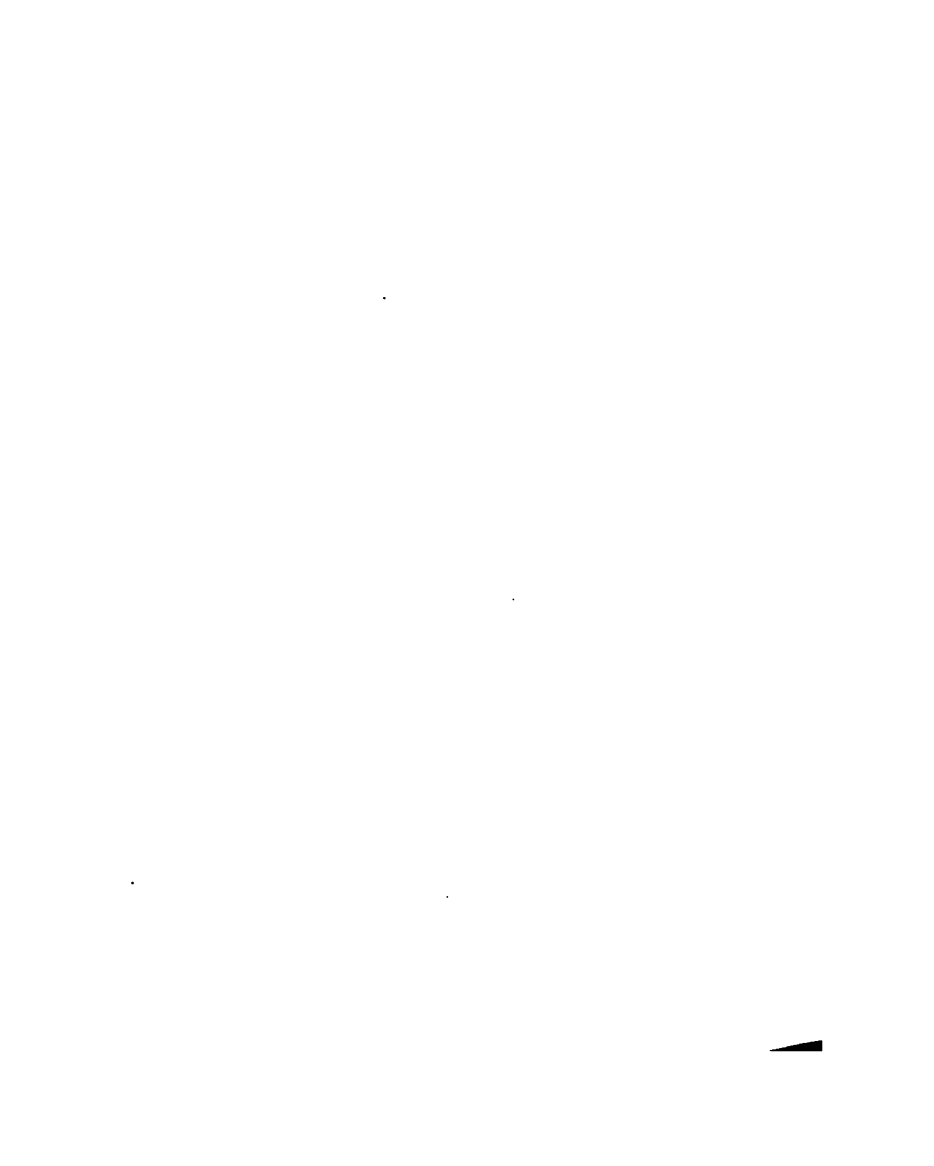
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